

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2019-290-WS - ORDER NO. 2020-258
MARCH 31, 2020

IN RE: Application of Blue Granite Water Company)
for Approval to Adjust Rate Schedules and)
Increase Rates) ORDER GRANTING
EXTENSION FOR
ISSUANCE OF ORDER

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (“the Commission”) for consideration of granting five additional days for issuance of the final order in this rate case, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-5-240 (D) involving Blue Granite Water Company (“Blue Granite” or “the Company”). That statute states that the Commission may extend the six-months issuance period for the Commission’s final order found in S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-5-240 (C) for an additional five days, when the Commission determines that it cannot, due to circumstances reasonably beyond its control, issue the order within the six-months period. Subsection D requires that this Commission state the circumstances reasonably beyond its control, and make appropriate findings concerning the need for the extended period.

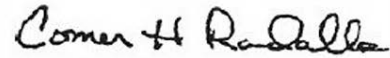
In this particular case, a compressed timeframe in which the Commission has to prepare the Order has resulted. This makes it extremely difficult to prepare the Order within the statutory timeframe, due to the voluminous nature of the record in this proceeding that must be reviewed, prior to Order preparation. The Commission held six evening public hearings in different areas of the State to hear the testimonies of Blue Granite’s customers,

and heard multiple testimonies (direct and rebuttal/surrebuttal) from some twenty professional witnesses at its offices in Columbia. These proceedings resulted in a massive written record for Commission review before order preparation could even commence. The need to review this record prior to order composition is necessary, but the voluminous nature of the record and the need to review it clearly justifies approval of the additional five days to issue the order in this rate case, beyond the six-months period shown in S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-5-240 (C). Further, an additional relevant circumstance beyond this Commission's control is that the current COVID – 19 pandemic has limited the Commission's review of the record by severely limiting the number of Commission Staff members that would otherwise be available to aid this Commission in its review of the record in this case. We believe that we have herein stated circumstances reasonably beyond this Commission's control. Accordingly, the additional five days to issue the order is granted, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-5-240 (D).

Further, Commission Regulation 103-831, adopts Rule 6 of the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure. Rule 6(a) states, in part, that when the period of time prescribed or allowed is less than seven days, intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays shall be excluded in the computation of the period at issue. Accordingly, the Commission shall issue its final order in this matter on or before April 9, 2020.

This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further Order of the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:



Comer H. "Randy" Randall, Chairman

ATTEST:



Jocelyn Boyd, Chief Clerk/Executive Director